



Our Journey...

From Faith to Truth

HCDC CELEBRATES THE YEAR OF FAITH (11 October 2012 – 24 November 2013)

(Goal: To institutionalize the school's thrust of integral evangelization)

Introduction

The year 2011 was the Jubilee Year (60th foundation anniversary) of the Holy Cross of Davao College (HCDC). We celebrated the year with the theme: *60 Years of Evangelization with Gratitude and Hope!* HCDC acknowledged and re-affirmed its participation in the essential mission of the Church to evangelize. The yearlong celebration also afforded the members of the school community an opportunity to commit in writing their personal reflections on the school motto: *Ex Fide Ad Veritatem* (From Faith to Truth).

On the same year, Pope Benedict XVI declared a Year of Faith starting on 11 October 2012 and concluding on 24 November 2013. The special year coincides with the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and also with the 20th Anniversary of the publication of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC).

In his Apostolic Letter *Porta Fidei* ("door of faith"), the Holy Father, noting "a profound crisis of faith that has affected many people" (no. 2), summons the faithful "to a stronger ecclesial commitment to new evangelization in order to rediscover the joy of believing and the enthusiasm to communicate the faith" (no. 7). His call is compelling given "the increasing challenge of the secular mentality which endeavors to stifle the voice of faith and eclipse its relevance to daily life" (*CBCP Pastoral Letter on the occasion of the 400 Years of Catholic Education in the Philippines*).



Years of Evangelization with Gratitude and Hope

Integral faith formation: a life-long journey from Faith to Truth

To know better the faith and to transmit it to the future generations is a task that we must make our own. It is our fundamental obligation by virtue of our baptism. In the course of this year, we make it our prayer that believers' witness of life may grow in credibility (cf. PF nos. 8-9). The CBCP Pastoral Letter of 9 July 2012 **"Live Christ, Share**



Christ" sums up the heart and challenge of faith and evangelization. "From our loving knowledge of Christ springs the desire to proclaim him, to evangelize, and to lead others to the 'yes' of faith in Jesus Christ" (CCC no. 429).

One effective way to proclaim the Gospel is by the witness of a simple lifestyle...patterned after the example of Jesus (*Vision-Mission*), who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life (Jn 14:6).

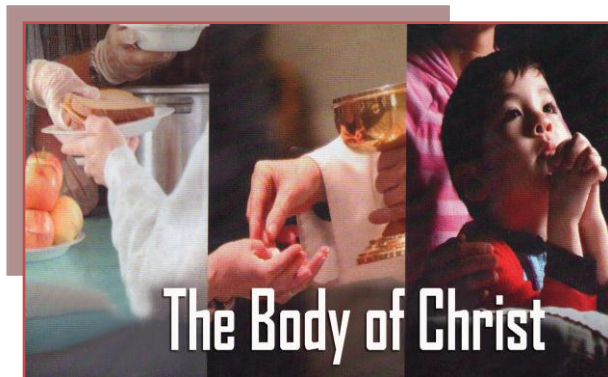
Christ's work demands faithfulness in small things done daily. He wants us to be part of his saving mission, to be fruitful bearers of the good news. "We are his hands by the honest work we do, his tongue by the kind words we speak, and his feet by the places and people we visit" (Knowles. 1991. *Voicing a thought on Sunday*).

The dynamic interplay of knowing, experiencing and sharing the faith: towards integration

For Catholic schools to realize their unique contribution to the Church's task of evangelization, they have to look into three interrelated components that need to be integrated: knowing, experiencing and sharing the faith. In our schools, a systematic and programmed instruction in the faith is expected.

Knowing the faith. Knowledge of the content of faith is essential for giving one's assent, that is to say for adhering fully with intellect and will to what the Church proposes; the fundamental content of faith that receives its systematic and organic synthesis in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (cf. PF nos. 10-11). The focus of the study is given to

the essentials of the faith drawn on the “four pillars:” the Creed, Sacraments, Commandments and Christian prayer (CCC 13; CFC 18). The faith that we know is to be celebrated in the sacraments; lived in daily life by obeying the commandments; and sustained by personal and communal prayer. There truly is a profound unity between the act by which we believe and the content to which we give our assent. “Man believes with his heart and so is justified, and he confesses with his lips and so is saved” (Romans 10:10).



Experiencing the faith.

“Faith grows when it is lived as an experience of love received and when it is communicated as an experience of grace and joy” (PF no.7). It therefore cannot survive only on objective information about what we believe in. To profess faith in the Trinity –

Father, Son and Holy Spirit – is to believe in God who is Love (1 Jn 4:8) and who loves us. “On page after page [of the CCC], we find that what is presented here is no theory, but an encounter with a Person who lives within the Church” (PF no. 11). To experience faith is to open our hearts to love. At this level, one is led “face to face with Jesus” who asks: Who do you say that I am? (Mt 16:15). Are you with me or against me? (Lk 11:23). These are enduring questions challenging those who hear to conversion and commitment.

Sharing the faith. “Faith without good works is useless” (James 2:20), without charity it bears no fruit. “Not only must the school community itself live by the values of the gospel, but also living these values will mean promoting the ideal of service to others, especially the poor and the less fortunate as Jesus did” (Knox, 2003, *Theology for Teachers*). As potent means of evangelization, Catholic schools will have to see their mission in the light of societal issues and problems. They have to see themselves as necessary part of the Church’s engagement in the transformation of society. This is the acid test of their participation in the promotion of the Church of the poor in proclaiming the kingdom values of truth, justice and peace for our times (*Vision-Mission*). “It is faith that enables us to recognize Christ and it is His love

that impels us to assist Him whenever He becomes our neighbour along the journey of life. Supported by faith, let us look with hope at our commitment in the world” (PF no.14).

It is worth recalling, at this point, what the *Second Plenary Council of the Philippines* (PCP II) states: The necessity of social transformation is not a new demand. What is new is its faith-motivation, as a demand of Christian discipleship (*PCP II* no. 274).

Establishment of a coordinating body: the Office of Integral Evangelization (OIE)

To effectively evangelize others and to lead them to the “yes” of faith in Jesus Christ, we need to acknowledge our own ongoing need to be evangelized. It would be difficult for teachers of the faith to ask someone to be committed to Christ and His Church if Jesus Christ and the Church have no meaning and relevance for them in their daily life. “Without conversion to the Lord, evangelization is fruitless” (*PCP II* no.189).



Education in the faith or the continuing evangelization of all school constituents has to be pursued consistently and in a collaborative manner. This necessitates the setting up of a body or an office that could coordinate the threefold dimensions of faith-development of the members of the school community and reinforce the processes of knowing, experiencing, believing and loving Jesus Christ so that the learners (disciples) are able to love and serve him in and among the poor and less fortunate.

The **Religious Education** unit handles the task of knowing the faith. Emphasis in instruction is given to, but not limited to, the concepts and understanding of the faith. Practice follows understanding. Without proper understanding, the practice of the faith often becomes less sustainable and solid. To do this, “all can find in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* a precious and indispensable tool (PF no. 11). The *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*, a national catechism that provides “a truly inculturated catechesis” (CFC no. 5), is also a sure norm for teaching the faith. They are worth studying.



The **Campus Ministry** takes care of providing opportunities for experiencing the faith through recollections, retreats, and discernment processes. It handles the regular celebration of the Eucharist and other liturgical services so that administrators, faculty, staff and students can celebrate their faith in worship centered on this most Holy Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The **Community Extension Services** is geared towards the education and organization for justice, respect for the dignity of the human person, protection for environment and ecological balance in line with the social teachings of the Church. In sharing the faith, the school opens its door to be in solidarity with the poor and contributes to the transformation of the society. Community outreach provides us the opportunity to concretize “our fundamental call as stewards of resources, time, life, people... of God’s beautiful creation!” (*Catechesis on Stewardship*).

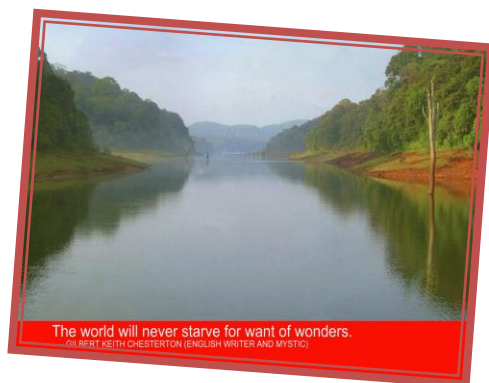
Shared direction: a synthesis of faith and life

Profession of faith is an act both personal and communitarian. A Christian may never think of belief as a private act. Faith demands social responsibility for what one believes (cf. PF no. 10). If we “simply view the teaching of religion or the faith as mere transmission of doctrine divorced from morality and worship” (*PCP II* no. 629), we will sorely “miss the mark.” To avoid the dichotomy, the teacher-evangelizer, whether in the

classroom setting or during spiritual undertaking or community outreach, must strive to integrate and do the following:

- ***Proclaim and “not just teach” the gospel message; present the personal challenge of Jesus “Who do you say that I am? Are you with me or against me?”***
- ***Help the learners/students to pray; and pray with them so they may come to meet the Lord!***
- ***Give a good example of living out the gospel message; love the poor and live a simple life.***

In a nutshell, the heart of the matter is for the school to facilitate the community's encounter with Jesus and to usher the members towards the path of conversion and transformation. Pope Benedict reminds us that “Christianity is not a new philosophy or a new form of morality. It is an encounter with a person – the person of Jesus. We are only Christian if we encounter Christ.”

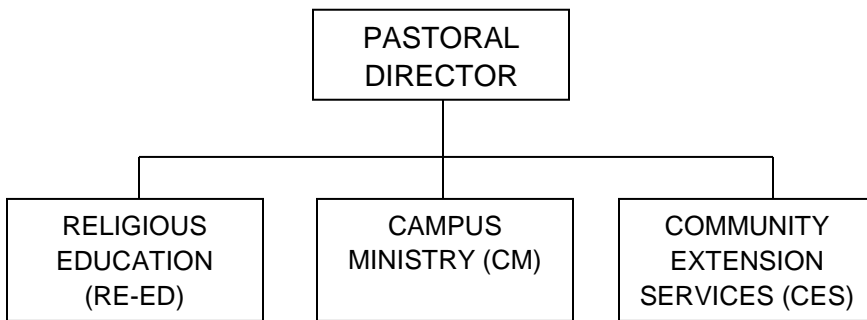


OIE: guiding principles, set-up, operational guidelines

Guiding Principles

- Evangelization is the work of the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who impels each individual to proclaim the gospel and it is the Holy Spirit who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood (cf. *Ad Gentes* no. 4).
- A participative or collaborative approach leads Catholics to realize that everyone needs to be evangelized, and that everyone is called by the faith to be an evangelizer (*PCP II* no. 197).
- The establishment of the Office of Integral Evangelization (OIE), if fully and properly undertaken, imprints in the school its catholic character/identity and institutionalizes the threefold program of knowing, experiencing, and sharing the faith.

Organizational Set-up



Operational Guidelines

1. Pursuing its shared direction and guided by it, the Triad of RE-ED, CM, CES should collaborate so that the formation process and objectives are achieved. It is directly under the Pastoral Director and should work closely with him.
2. Respecting the priority concern proper to each ministry, the Triad as a body has a coordinative relationship with the Vice Presidents, Deans, Principals, Program Heads, and other unit/office heads.
3. Upholding academic freedom (properly understood), all are enjoined to adhere in making **“Religion as core of the curriculum.”** This being understood not only in a strict sense but in a comprehensive sense, to wit:

A Catholic school is one in which God and His truth, the gospel values, all human values that enhance human dignity and development, and the significance of faith in one’s life are integrated into the entire syllabus (of all courses not only in the RE-ED subjects), into the curriculum, into the institutional life of the school. PCP II affirms: “The Catholic school or college is not only a place, but a Catholic environment where members of the administration, the faculty, staff and the students help each other (and the parents as well) develop into Filipinos who are makaDiyos (Christ-centered), makatao (person-oriented), makabayan (patriotic), and not makasarili (not self-centered)” (no. 636).

4. In order to facilitate and sustain the implementation of the entire formation process, the continuing evangelization of the administration and of all faculty members, not just of the RE-ED teachers, is to be taken to heart and given priority. **The role of the faculty is very vital;**

Teachers are the most “constant variable,” so to speak, in the entire formation process. By their teaching and witnessing, they are in the best and privileged position to provide the continuity of faith-formation in class, “year after year.”



5. During the year of faith, the school community would do its best to devote greater attention to the study and appreciation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, making it a resource for catechesis. As such, the CCC should be able to provide real support for faith, especially for those concerned with the formation of Christians (cf. PF no. 12). The Triad, through the RE-ED and CM, would initiate a study plan to realize it.
6. The Triad, through the CES, would devise a scheme for a periodic and systematic exposure of administrators, faculty, staff and students to the context of the poor and the less fortunate. Hopefully, such a process of contextualization will help engender the development of a preferential love for the poor and of a missionary spirit in every sector of the school community (cf. PCP II no. 642).

Mary: model in faith and charity

We turn our gaze to Mary and implore her motherly intercession to lead us patiently and lovingly in our own journey of faith and in our evangelizing mission. **Mary was the first to be evangelized.** In her, we have a sure guide.

The *Second Vatican Council* calls Mary “an outstanding model in faith and charity” (*Lumen Gentium* no. 53). By faith Mary welcomed the Good News announced to her by the Angel Gabriel. She inquired into its meaning. Through faith she conceived the Son of God in her heart and by the power of the Holy Spirit conceived him in her womb. From that moment when she said her definite yes to the Lord, she submitted her whole self to God trustingly and continued to walk in her pilgrimage of faith.



Mary was not only the first to be evangelized; she was not only the first to receive the Good News. **She was also the first evangelizer.** After the annunciation, she carried Jesus in her heart and womb. At the visitation, she brought Jesus, the Good News, to her cousin Elizabeth and brought joy to her and to the child in her womb, John, who leapt for joy. Elizabeth’s greeting resounds until today:

“Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled” (Lk 1:45).

All her life until her last ordeal when “she stood at the foot of the cross” (Jn 19:26), Mary was always a giver of Jesus to people. It is for this faith that all generations have called Mary blessed.

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REV. MSGR. JULIUS C. RODULFA
President



HCDC VISION-MISSION STATEMENT

The Holy Cross of Davao College, Inc. (HCDC) is a community of Christ-centered evangelizers educated in the faith and animated by the passion for truth, justice, peace and service.

As members of this Filipino archdiocesan educational institution, we commit ourselves

- to promote quality Catholic education to all, especially the less fortunate, and
- to create through dialogue a Christian environment for the integral formation of persons who will be effective agents of social transformation.

/This short version was approved by the Board during its 14 June 2012 meeting.

